

## **Operations Forum Minutes December 21, 2005**

**Present:** Kay Cochrane, NIWIB; Debbie Coble, Goodwill Industries of Northern Indiana; Jennifer Long, Goodwill of Central Indiana; Linda Gilbert IWD; L. Diane Swift, Transition Resources; Nancy Vrabic, Western Indiana ETS; Pat Miller, ECO; Milena Castellanos, Guest;; Tom Brown, IWD; Karen Swain, IWD; Tina Judd, South Central WDS; Pat Griffin, Interlocal Association; Rick Lindsey, IWD; Frank Rivera, Workforce Development Services; Kay Gordon, IPIC, Cynthia Cassanova, IPIC, Beth Doucette, Workforce Development Strategies; Jackie James, Southern Seven WIB; Jennifer Biddle, IWD; Franka Siscel, Career Choices, Chair; Miche Grant, CWI Minutes

### **Updates on changes to Fiscal System:**

The meeting was launched by Craig Thompson with an overview of changes to fiscal system and fiscal reporting. Craig noted that the change over from FARS to People Soft will take place the end of the month (December). All cash draws should be completed by now, but they will take emergency requests 12/27. There will be a final Fiscal training session on the use of People Soft on 12/28. The January reporting will be completed on the new system and the VPN officially closed by that point. On other fiscal business Craig told the group about the proposed split of funds (by the Feds) to an 81/19% share. This may not be finalized but if it is it would not take effect until PY 06 *at the earliest*. Another alert related to the use of Dislocated Worker and Rapid Response funds. There are emergency funds available and requests would go to Bill Miller for Tier 1. Both Western and Southern Seven have both recently been approved or are in the approval process for RR funds, but additional money remains for those in need.

### **Introductions**

Franka officially opened the meeting thanking Craig for coming in and asked to go around the table making introductions. Franka then introduced the program for the day.

### **NIWIB – Demand Driven Strategy:**

Kay Cochrane, NIWIB and Deb Coble, Goodwill of Northern Indiana, presented the NIWIB Demand Driven Strategy to the group. For convenience Kay has provided the slides she used during this presentation and that file has been attached to this e-mail distributing the meeting minutes. Kay explain the process they went through to implement their philosophy, including the development of a consortium incorporating the WIB, IWD, Goodwill, and Job Works whose role was to spearhead the initiative and design. NIWIB also approached Region V with their vision. Kay explained how they established a business plan for this but currently it is considered proprietary by their board therefore not available for distribution. The final slides of the power point reference the goals set forth by this initiative. Below are several questions that were asked about this effort:

- Question: Are the Business Services Division (BSD) and Individual Service Staff the same people? Answer: No
- Question: Am I to understand that the perception of the unemployed is a bad thing because it suggests low skills? Answer: Yes, we still have a stigma about being the ‘unemployment’ office, and have a special entrance for employers – but I must add this mis-perception is getting better.
- Question: I am a grantee, but also an employer who has not been pleased with the referrals I have gotten from the system. You spoke about a gatekeeper; how does that work? Answer: It has to do with better screening of applicants and better job descriptions.
- Question: Is the website you mentioned connected with CS3? Answer: No we have our own job listing website/database.

## State Reports:

Jennifer launched the state reports with the introduction of Karen Swain. Karen works as part of the Center for Excellence, under the leadership of Tony Collier within Brooke Huntington's division. Karen was recruited from Southeastern area to provide assistance with this department.

Rick Lindsey, IWD Evaluation, then reported currently that he was heavily engaged with the Job Matching System proposals and anticipated involvement with the review and presentation for the Case Management system. The Case Management proposals are due in mid January.

Tom Brown, IWD Oversight, shared that the unit had been out the past three weeks, but that reports are pretty much on track. There are no issues that seem to consistently dominate their reviews with the exception of varying technicalities surrounding exit dates.

Linda Gilbert was acknowledged and Jennifer reported that Linda continues to focus on TAA matters.

Jennifer Biddle also sent along Bill Miller's regrets as he had planned to attend Operations Forum today but unavoidably could not.

Jennifer continued her report with the following (non-related) informational pieces and updates:

- 1) The Best News – Agency is caught up with the UI backlog. Last year this time the backlog was about 30,000, right now it is down to under 6,000.
- 2) Information on WOTC (the TJTC replacement) will be going out to employers. This program is very beneficial for employers and Jennifer wanted the group to know that information will soon be distributed in case there were calls.
- 3) If you have legitimate needs for additional sub-state allocations for Dislocated Worker there are funds available. As noted: Southern Seven and Western have requested and been approved funds. Do not forget you can transfer funds between dislocated worker (WIA 1D) and adult (WIA 1A); requests to go Bill Miller.
- 4) The **State Plan** has been formally approved by DOL. This now allows IWD to move forward on a two WIB state. Marion County will have its own independent WIB and the Balance of State will have a WIB which becomes a role of the State Human Resource Investment Council (SHRIC). As part of this initiative: **a)** Jennifer is working on a question and answer page for the transition. There is contemplation of putting the Q & A on the website but that has not been approved yet. **b)** No Regional Board has been certified yet. **c)** The Center of Excellence – a unit under Tony Collier within Brooke Huntington's purview – will be the unit to approve and certify Regional Groups. **d)** The question as to how those not directly connected with Regional Boards will know when the RFP's go out was posed. Jennifer said she would bring that to Bill's attention. Along this same subject it was suggested that the notices be put on the Website. (Jennifer's answer: this would be difficult due to varying documents to be used as the RFP for RO and Service provider since this is a regional not statewide solicitation). The issue commented upon was by being excluded from any due process due to possible conflict of interest, how can current and new entities who want to bid for a role, be assured that they will be notified. Also the question about what will happen if an area lags behind and does not make the progress toward setting up their board and becoming certified. Jennifer will bring this to Bill Miller's attention. **e)** Some members present stated they had seen a sample RFP and others had been told there was none. Jennifer will follow up with Bill Miller on this.

- 5) Jennifer asked the group if they have seen the recently released TAB on Youth being considered as a Displaced Homemaker. Many folks present were not aware so she will send it along to the field/service provider staff.
- 6) Training updates by Jennifer reported that Jody Sue Kelly was in for training and as always a big hit. Edward DeJesus will be in to do a session on Youth Issues. Beverly Ford is coming back and the dates will be announced. Many of the national trainers we have had here were involved with the recent Region V Youth Conference.
- 7) **TAA-WIA coordination is a MUST DO** and should be strategized and implemented immediately. The key aspect of this relationship that needs to be set up is coordination at the backend of participation including placement and follow up. Shawn and Jennifer are available to provide technical assistance, train, and/or smooth out any issues that might be inhibiting locals. Rick Lindsey said to watch for a TEGL that should be released by DOL that removes replacement wage from the standards and changes the measure to earnings gains. Although this may not apply until PY 06 or later, it may help resolve an issue that has served as a disincentive to some of the 'cross enrollment' between programs such as TAA.
- 8) WIA reauthorization is not progressing smoothly. (shocking) There was a hold put on the reauthorization by one or more legislators, it was then taken off, and appears to be back on again. This means that action on the legislation is halted. On a similar note there is a lack of progress on the appropriations bill as well.
- 9) Debit Cards for UI are coming.
- 10) Question posed: Are the transition questions that we gave Tony Collier last month being addressed and/or answers published? Answer: They will be included in the Q & A that I am putting together.
- 11) Question: (Regarding IMPACT) What is going to happen now that the partnership between IWD and FSSA has been halted? Answer: I have not heard that the partnership is dissolved, rather some of the philosophies and approaches will be changed. Jennifer will follow up on this and bring it to administrations attention.

The group then talked a little about the next meeting scheduled for January 25 at the IGCS. Miche Grant explained that both the National Workforce Alliance and the Indiana Alliance will come and provide a panel presentation. The Indiana Workforce Alliance is an informal statewide discussion group, not 'officially' affiliated with the NWA. The NWA is a national group whose mission is to identify workforce issues, evaluation, and advocate for change. The IWA has had a loose affiliation with NWA, but not formally organized by their standards. The IWA is more discussion, issue orient and not advocacy based like NWA.

The meeting was adjourned with all welcomed to attend the IWA meeting that was to be held at the Indiana Coalition for Homeless and Housing office at 12:30.